



TELEPHONE: (781) 235-0135

WWW.WELLESLEYMA.GOV

LEONARD IZZO

DIRECTOR, WELLESLEY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Masks for Merchants Program is a Key Ingredient for Wellesley Restaurants

January 21, 2022 (Wellesley, MA) – The Wellesley Health Department's masks for merchants education campaign is promoting safer workplaces and easing COVID fears for local businesses and restaurants, their employees, and patrons. [Mask signs](#) help reinforce the Town mask advisory, medical mask supplies are supporting stepped up safety protocols, and personal visits are giving merchants the chance to connect with health officials, ask questions, and share concerns.

According to Alta Strada manager Guy Neil, these are "key ingredients" that have kept his restaurant running during the COVID pandemic and especially during the recent Omicron surge. "We've had challenges here and there, but we've felt an overwhelming sense of support from our guests and neighbors, and of course the Town of Wellesley who is helping our efforts to keep everyone safe," he said. "That's our first priority as we work to provide a comfortable and fun dining experience."

Thanks to a \$2,000 grant from the [Community Fund for Wellesley](#), an endowed fund of the Foundation for MetroWest, the Health Department purchased 12,500 medical grade masks in early January. Mask ambassadors (aka. volunteers and staff) are distributing them to all merchants. Most Wellesley businesses have already received the supplies, but merchants who still need them can reach out directly to [the Health Department](#).

"We've had such positive feedback about this campaign," said Vivian Zeng, senior environmental health specialist. "When confidence is low, workers are stressed, and business is slow so having the chance to connect with our merchants, share the latest safety guidelines, and offer positive support makes a big difference."

For Maugus Restaurant owner Charlie Papakonstantinou, these efforts have helped his small restaurant bend but not break. "The times have been truly challenging, but with the guidance from the Health Department and Vivian, Maugus is up to date on State and Federal COVID-19 requirements. It's made our dining experience a safe one, and we're so grateful that we can keep serving our much appreciated customers."

Mask Up, Wellesley!

To protect yourself and others, the Health Department is encouraging wearing surgical or medical grade masks if possible to provide more protection. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that everyone over the age of 2 wear the most protective mask you can that fits well and that you can wear consistently. Visit the [CDC website](#) to learn more about the types of masks and the level of protection they provide.

Order Free Test Kits

Every household in Wellesley can now order up to four at-home COVID tests kits, free from the Federal government. The kits ship in 7-12 days via the U.S. Postal Service. Learn more and place orders at www.CovidTests.gov